

ABSTRSTRACTCOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

- 10 A communications network comprises a plurality of core nodes establishing a transport network, and service nodes each coupled to a core node and providing access to the transport network. A network management system is arranged to define and manage one or more virtual public/private networks within the communications network. Groups of core nodes are configured as abstract nodes within which any available path may be selected to achieve a requested connection. End to end label switched paths are established via the management system by specifying a series of abstract nodes